

State Grants to Municipalities in the 30th District

| | Town | FY 04 | FY 05/Revised |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| • | Brookfield | \$1,392,977 | \$1,478,534 |
| • | Canaan | \$319,001 | \$396,683 |
| • | Cornwall | \$155,953 | \$189,051 |
| • | Goshen | \$274,743 | \$318,681 |
| • | Kent | \$325,882 | \$362,738 |
| • | Litchfield | \$1,395,755 | \$1,504,016 |
| • | Morris | \$648,050 | \$689,744 |
| • | New Milford | \$11,304,953 | \$11,589,446 |
| • | North Canaan | \$1,889,871 | \$1,986,804 |
| • | Salisbury | \$235,889 | \$282,861 |
| • | Sharon * | \$459,487 | \$283,429 |
| • | Torrington | \$21,368,587 | \$21,852,774 |
| • | Warren | \$141,671 | \$185,236 |
| • | Washington | \$300,044 | \$357,037 |
| • | Winchester | \$7,062,014 | \$7,430,561 |

* The reduction in aid to Sharon is the result of Sharon Hospital becoming a for-profit facility which now pays taxes directly to the town instead of the State making a payment in lieu of taxes

New Law Will Provide Treatment Option for First-time Drunk Driving Offenders

First time offenders under Connecticut’s drunk driving laws may, under certain conditions, avoid jail by successfully completing an "Alcohol Education Program." I was pleased this year to help secure passage of a new law which will now enable the court to refer first time offenders who are identified as chronic substance abusers to a treatment program rather than an education program. This option is needed both to help keep our roads safe and to connect people fighting an addiction with the services they need to address their illness. I was honored to receive a GLADD Award (Government Leaders Against Drunk Driving) from Mothers Against Drunk Driving for my work on this initiative.



State Senator

Andrew Roraback

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State Senator
Andrew Roraback

Serving the people of:

Brookfield, Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Kent,

Litchfield, Morris, New Milford, North Canaan,

Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren,

Washington & Winchester



State Senator

Andrew Roraback



Dear Friend,

The 2004 regular session of the General Assembly ended in May. This session, my fourth as your state senator, was an unprecedented experience for me. While both the public and legislators were often preoccupied with the investigation surrounding the possible impeachment of Governor Rowland, the legislature still managed to pass a budget and other important initiatives that promise to serve our state and its citizens well for years to come.

I believe Governor Rowland’s decision to resign his office was best for him, his family and, most importantly, for our state. I look forward to working with Governor Rell and my colleagues from both sides of the aisle on rebuilding the public trust which is the foundation of our democracy.

As your state senator, I have made it my top priority to try to keep you informed about the work your state government is doing. This legislative report summarizes some of the major actions taken during this year’s legislative session. I hope you will find it interesting and informative. I also hope you will consider signing up to receive my periodic e-mail newsletter which provides updates on legislative activities in Hartford.

If you would like to sign up to receive this newsletter, please visit www.senatoreps.state.ct.us, click on my homepage and then click on “newsletter”.

If you have questions about the legislation discussed in this report, or any other matter concerning state government, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you in Hartford.

Sincerely,
Andrew



Senator Roraback welcomes one of many young visitors to the Senate Chamber

After 10 years, Perfect Attendance Streak Continues

Since beginning his service in the General Assembly on January 4, 1995, Senator Roraback has cast 4,761 consecutive votes, having been present for every vote taken in his ten legislative sessions. Senator Roraback, who served three terms in the House, and is now serving his fourth year in the Senate, is the only member of the General Assembly with this record. *

* Legislative rules have required Senator Roraback to abstain from five votes taken

Clean Cars

During this legislative session, I co-sponsored new legislation which will require cars and light trucks sold in Connecticut to meet stricter emissions standards beginning with the 2008 model year. In that automobile exhaust is the most pervasive pollutant in our state, I am proud that Connecticut now joins its neighboring states in the Northeast by requiring strict reductions in toxins that cause asthma and other respiratory ailments. The new law will also require manufacturers to have 10% of the cars they sell be zero emission vehicles or their equivalent.

ConnPACE

The budget passed by the legislature this year repealed the controversial “reach back” provision that passed over my objection last year and which would have allowed the state to make claims on the estates of certain deceased ConnPACE participants. I worked to undo this provision because I do not believe the state should be in the business of trying to recoup program expenses through the probate courts, and I do not think seniors in Connecticut should worry about losing their estates in order to receive a prescription drug benefit.



Indian Casinos

The threat of additional Indian casinos continues. In January of this year the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs reversed itself and granted tribal recognition to the Schaghticokes. It is now clear that the BIA did a thoroughly inadequate job because an internal BIA memo surfaced showing that the agency had contravened its own rules by recognizing this tribe despite the fact that it failed to meet published standards.

This is but one more piece of evidence indicating that the BIA is a seriously broken agency unwilling to stand up to the armies of lawyers, lobbyists and influence peddlers backed by billion-dollar non-Indian investors. The State of Connecticut continues to contest the recognition and is participating with the Town of Kent and other northwest corner towns in an administrative appeal of the decision and preparing a court challenge.

Teachers’ Retirement Fund

The state Senate unanimously passed a resolution, which I co-sponsored, calling for a constitutional amendment that would require the legislature to fund the Teachers’ Retirement Fund (TRF) at 100% every year.

Currently, we have a \$3 billion liability in the TRF from years of under-funding. There are those who say we cannot afford to fund the TRF fully because it would require the state to make substantially greater payments to the fund each year. As one of the most vocal advocates of this concept in the General Assembly I say we cannot afford NOT to do this.

Unfortunately, the measure was never taken up in the House of Representatives for a vote. Thus, we are left yet again this year with a system that depends solely on the discretion of the legislature as to how much we fund or under-fund the TRF.



Local Agencies Providing Hospice Services in Rural Area Win Legislative Victory

In the summer of 2003, leaders of Hospice of Northwest Connecticut, the Salisbury Public Health Nursing Association and Visiting Nurse and Homecare Northwest brought to my attention the fact that because of the rural nature of their service areas, Connecticut’s laws prevented them from being fully reimbursed for hospice services provided by visiting nurses to terminally ill patients. Individuals representing these agencies came to Hartford to testify before the Public Health Committee in support of a bill I sponsored which would correct this law and allow full reimbursement. This important bill then passed both the Senate and the House and became law on May 10, 2004, thus insuring hospice patients and their caregivers that these services will be available to those residing in even the most remote and rural areas of Connecticut.